

## **Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes - Final October 17, 2007**

**In Attendance:** Sheri Baron, Marlissa Briggett, Christine Carney, Joseph Curro (Chair), Christine Deshler, Nick Minton, Nancy Rhoads (Vice Chair), Marlene Schultz,

**Absent:** Victoria Cohen, Mahendra Desai, Jorge Loayza, Nancy Sweeney, Bill Shea

### **Review of August/September Minutes**

Commissioner Schultz made a motion to accept minutes as amended – seconded by Commissioner Minton. Approved unanimously.

**Citizens Open Forum** – No guests this evening.

### **Diversity Training**

25 respondents to date – commissioners worked on the logistics of the seminar – Chair will send reminders to all – for Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 9 AM-4PM at the Robbins House.

### **Networks and Coalitions** –

**NPFH** – Chair was invited to speak at the October 15<sup>th</sup> Selectmen's meeting regarding the resolution they had voted to endorse. Commissioners Curro and Schultz reported on the October 16<sup>th</sup> NPFH steering committee meeting and the commission discussed the possibility of offering the Campaign for Understanding as a vehicle for continuing the program's work but a decision on this was deferred. Consensus was reached to invite representatives of No Place for Hate and Vision 2020 Diversity Task Group to a future meeting to discuss ways in which we can work together without duplicating one another's efforts.

**MAHRC** – with so much going on at this time there has been no time for attend the regular monthly meeting - Chair suggested that Commissioners visit their website to keep updated with their activities. (MAHRC.org)

### **Incidents and Complaints** -

**Complaint Regarding Brackett School Newsletter** – the subcommittee met with Policies and Procedures on how to address the complaint initiated by a Brackett parent.

Commissioner Deshler presented three motions, as follows:

**#1** - To accept the finding of the subcommittee regarding the Brackett School complaint that cause does exist and to support the allegation of discrimination made in the complaint brought by Anna Watson against Nate Levenson and Stephanie Zerchakov.

**#2** – Because the Commission understands that the parties are mediating this dispute, at this time the Commission will take no further action on the Anna Watson complaint unless a party requests that the complaint process be resumed.

**#3** – The Commission votes to direct the subcommittee to send a letter to the parties explaining the decisions of the Commission.

Commissioner Schultz seconded each motion, and each in turn was unanimously passed. Chair expressed his thanks to Commissioners Schultz and Briggett for their work on the complaint and to Commissioners Deshler and Cohen for their advice.

Commissioner Briggett will write a letter to the Superintendent, complainant and principal with the findings of the commission. As each complaint is different, the Commission revisited how future complaints might be handled. It was also decided by consensus that any future complaint investigation should commence with a joint meeting of the investigatory subcommittee and the Subcommittee on Policies and Procedures.

#### **Subcommittee Reports -**

**Dialogue Subcommittee** – Dialogue on Immigration is set for Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at the Senior Center. Vice Chair is finalizing plans for the November 5<sup>th</sup> dialogue on Islam on November 5<sup>th</sup> at the Robbins House.

**Policies and Procedures** – no report

**Schools** – no report

**Rapid Response/Publicity** – no report

#### **Other Business** –

Commissioner Carney spoke of the Winchester Multicultural Network Newsletter and the Harvest Ball at Town Hall ending the celebration of the Town's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Motion made by Commissioner Minton to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Carney seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

*Respectfully submitted by:*

*Marylynn Carnell, Staff Assistant*